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Fifth Element

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Marymount University

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Fifth Element

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Keywords: Eveningwear, Structure, Silhouette, Dimension

This 2-piece eveningwear look was created for a design challenge involving Space and Form. The goal was to engage the negative space around the body while considering silhouette in three dimensions, and to conceive a creative design in monochrome.



My inspiration for this design came from the sci-fi genre. As an abstract, idea-oriented inspiration, I used the particularly engaging and original forms found in the movie *Fifth Element*. The buildings and sceneries contributed both to the shape of the garment and to the use of boning to give a gravity-defying element. The fact that Jean Paul Gaultier designed the costumes for the movie also fueled my ambition while creating this piece.

A more direct influence, however, was the balance of strength, mechanism, and femininity found in the *Star Trek: Voyager* character Seven of Nine. I chose an eggplant purple double-faced satin to mimic my favorite Seven of Nine costume, a velour jumpsuit of the same colour. The fabrication was chosen for the double-faced aspect as well as for its buoyancy, which contributes to the movement of the garment. I decided to create depth and contrast without the aid of hue by using both the satin and the crepe side of the double-faced material, which also reflects Seven of Nine's battle of human vs. machine identity throughout the show, finally resulting in a balance of the two.

A mix of flat patternmaking and draping was used to create this design. Shape was created in the pointed shoulders, the tails of the jacket, and the hem of the skirt through use of spiral steel boning. The boning also aids in the stability of the exposed hook-and-eye tape at the front of the jacket. Because the inside of the jacket is visible, and to add further support for the boning, all raw edges were given French seams. I treated the seams of the skirt in the same way so that the two pieces would match.

